

## ***FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET***

**Meeting Date:** August 26, 2014

**Agenda Item:** Beaver Creek County Park (Hill County) Fishing and Boating Easement Access

**Division:** Fisheries

**Action Needed:** Endorsement to Proceed

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 5 minutes

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### **Background**

Beaver Creek Reservoir is located in Hill County within the larger Beaver Creek Park complex. Within Beaver Creek Park is another reservoir known as Bear Paw Reservoir. FWP has had an easement to manage Bear Paw as a recreation site since 1964. Both reservoirs, as well as Beaver Creek which connects them, are stocked with fish by FWP. Several years ago, Hill County began charging day use fees at Beaver Creek Park with the exception of Bear Paw FAS. This January those fees were increased by 30 percent for day use and 40 percent for an annual pass. Local anglers and FWP oppose fees for anglers because FWP spends approximately \$15,000 annually to stock the reservoir and creek with fish. Without the use of license fees from anglers the fish stocking program would be either nonexistent or operating at a much lower level. FWP is proposing to negotiate an agreement with Hill County that would exempt anglers and boaters from paying an entrance fee or annual fee to either fish or boat within Hill County Park. The agreement would ideally include Beaver Creek Reservoir, Bear Paw Reservoir and Beaver Creek. Under the proposed agreement, Hill County would be able to continue charging for other non boating/angling activities such as camping, picnicking, swimming, etc.

### **Public Involvement Process & Results:**

FWP met with Hill County Commissioners and the Hill County Park Board on two separate occasions—once to discuss the access fee being applied to boaters and anglers and then to discuss conceptual solutions to the fee.

### **Alternatives and Analysis:**

With preliminary endorsement by the F&W Commission, FWP will work with Hill County to reach an agreement that will eliminate fees for anglers and boaters using Beaver Creek Reservoir and possibly Beaver Creek. Without F&W Commission endorsement, FWP will not pursue the project further. Anglers and boaters accessing Beaver Creek Park will remain subject to Hill County's fee procedures.

### **Agency Recommendation & Rationale:**

FWP recommends that the F&W Commission endorse efforts by FWP to pursue an agreement with Hill County and the Hill County Park Board. If negotiations are successful, the proposed agreement will be brought before the F&W Commission for final approval.

### **Proposed Motion:**

I move the F&W Commission authorize FWP to pursue an agreement with Hill County and the Hill County Park Board regarding user fees for anglers in Beaver Creek Park.